AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) A multiple disc clutch apparatus comprising:

a plurality of externally splined annular friction plates, to one side surface only of each externally splined annular friction plate being fixed a friction material, and each externally splined annular friction plate being formed with engagement teeth at an outer periphery,

a plurality of internally splined annular friction plates, to one side surface only of each internally splined annular friction plate being fixed a friction material, and each internally splined annular friction plate being formed with engagement teeth at an inner periphery,

said externally splined friction plate and said internally splined friction plate being alternately arranged in a direction in which the frictional materials are not overlapped with each other,

wherein the externally splined annular separator plates each formed with engagement teeth on the outer peripheral surface thereof are respectively interposed between the surface with the frictional material fixed thereto of said internally splined friction plate and said externally splined friction plate.

2. (original) A multiple disc clutch apparatus comprising:

a plurality of externally splined annular friction plates, to one side surface only of each externally splined annular friction plate being fixed a friction material, and each externally splined annular friction plate being formed with engagement teeth at an outer periphery,

a plurality of internally splined annular friction plates, to one side surface only of each internally splined annular friction plate being fixed a friction material, and each internally splined annular friction plate being formed with engagement teeth at an inner periphery,

said externally splined friction plate and said internally splined friction plate being alternately arranged in a direction in which the frictional materials are not overlapped with each other,

wherein the internally splined annular separator plates each formed with engagement teeth on the inner peripheral surface thereof are respectively interposed between the surface with the frictional material fixed thereto of said externally splined friction plate and said internally splined friction plate.

3. (original) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein communication grooves for communicating the inner periphery thereof with the outer periphery are formed on at least one of a surface of said externally splined friction plate facing said externally splined separator plate and a surface of said externally splined separate plate facing said externally splined friction plate.

4. (original) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein communication grooves for communicating the inner periphery thereof with the outer periphery are formed on at least one of a surface of said internally splined friction plate facing said internally splined separator plate and a surface of said internally splined separator plate facing said internally splined friction plate.

5. (Currently amended) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 3 ~~or 4~~, wherein said

communication grooves are formed radially from said inner periphery toward said outer periphery.

6. (Currently amended) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 3 ~~or 4~~, wherein said communication grooves are formed in a net structure.

7. (Currently amended) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 3 ~~or 4~~, wherein said communication grooves comprise:

an annular groove formed between said inner periphery and said outer periphery;

first slanting grooves for communicating said inner periphery with said annular groove; and

second slanting grooves for communicating said annular groove with said outer periphery.

8. (New) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said communication grooves are formed radially from said inner periphery toward said outer periphery.

9. (New) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said communication grooves are formed in a net structure.

10. (New) The multiple disc clutch apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein said communication grooves comprise:

an annular groove formed between said inner periphery and said outer periphery;

first slanting grooves for communicating said inner periphery with said annular groove; and

second slanting grooves for communicating said annular groove with said outer periphery.